

A proposal for a
CENTER FOR NICARAGUAN DEMOCRACY
a project of
THE FOUNDATION FOR DEMOCRATIC EDUCATION

On June 12, 1985, by a margin of 248-184, the House voted to provide \$27 million in non-lethal aid to the democratic resistance of Nicaragua. The Senate adopted similar legislation, which provides \$38 million. It is expected that the President will soon be able to sign the Supplemental Appropriations Bill soon so that aid will be resumed after a fifteen month cut-off.

This was a remarkable turnabout from the earlier April 24th vote and a great victory for the cause of Democracy in Nicaragua and all of Central America.

This legislative shift came about after lengthy negotiations between the President and members of the Congress which led the President to transmit a letter to Congress on June 11th. (See Attachment A.) This letter outlines what can fairly be described as a new U.S. policy toward Nicaragua. In this letter the President:

- * states very clearly that the U.S. does not "seek the overthrow of the Sandinista government or to put in its place a government based on supporters of the old Somoza regime."
- * reaffirms his commitment to seek "National reconciliation through a church-mediated dialogue." He specifically rules out "power sharing based on military force" and notes that this "is also the position of the Nicaraguan opposition leaders, who have agreed that executive authority in Nicaragua should change only through elections."
- * states a Presidential commitment "to urge (the leaders of the resistance forces) to investigate allegations of past human rights abuses and take appropriate actions to prevent future abuses,"

- * indicates his willingness to resume bilateral talks with Nicaragua if consultations with our allies in Central America, the Contadora countries and other democratic governments convince him that such talks will help promote internal reconciliation and a Contadora agreement.

In short, in this new and succinct statement the President has put a new face on U.S. policy toward Nicaragua.

THE TRANSFORMATION OF THE NICARAGUAN RESISTANCE

In a parallel development, the Nicaraguan resistance has also put on a new face. On June 12, in El Salvador, Adolfo Calero, Arturo Cruz, and Alfonso Robelo announced the formation of the Unified Nicaraguan Opposition (UNO). UNO, they explained, will serve as the agency to "conduct the efforts of a democratic Nicaragua on all the battlefronts."

These three figures -- all of them civilian political leaders whose democratic commitments caused them to serve jail terms for opposing the Somoza dictatorship -- will share executive authority in this new organization.

They are to act both as the Commanders-in-Chief of the armed insurgency -- with authority to promote, demote and remove all officers and staff -- and as the leadership of the political and diplomatic campaign to gain support inside Nicaragua and worldwide for the movement for Nicaraguan democracy.

This represents a transformation in the Nicaraguan resistance movement -- one which, unfortunately, has been largely overlooked in our own media. In the beginning, this movement was clearly a military proxy force dominated by the United States. It lacked well-defined political character, leadership or program. It has now taken a major step toward transforming itself into an independent, indigenous, and democratic movement. While it may get assistance from the United States, it is becoming a movement of, by and for Nicaraguans. It has grown from fewer than 500 members to more than 20,000 in a few

years time.

These two changes impose heavy new responsibilities -- both on the Nicaraguan resistance leaders and on those in the United States who support their cause. The Nicaraguans must develop and put into practice a wholly new organizational mechanism for carrying forward their cause. There is also a lesser but profoundly important need for a new, non-governmental agency in the United States: one which can educate the American public (and the media) about the program and activities of the Nicaraguan democratic movement, which can help build the broadest possible public support here for that movement, which can respond to attacks upon that movement from its enemies here, and which can educate Nicaraguan democrats about the sometimes complex processes of political life in this country. (It should be remembered that public opinion surveys still indicate that vast numbers of our citizens are not sure even about which side we are on in Nicaragua.) It must be emphasized that this effort cannot be financed by U.S. government funds: it must be financed by private sources, and all its funding and expenditures must be open to public review.

FUNCTIONS OF THE CENTER

The Center will be located in Washington, D.C., and will be managed by a Coordinating Committee and an Executive Director. Some of those who might be invited to join the Coordinating Committee are: Bernard Aronson, Consultant, The Policy Project; Bruce Cameron, human rights activist; William C. Doherty, Jr., Executive Director, American Institute for Free Labor Development; Mark Falcoff, Resident Fellow, Hemispheric Studies, American Enterprise Institute; Penn Kemble, President, Foundation for Democratic Education; Robert Leiken, Senior Associate, The Carnegie Endowment for International Peace; L. Ronald

Scheman, Director, Center for the Advanced Studies of the Americas and Larry Harrison, former AID Director, Nicaragua. But this effort must clearly span the political and ideological spectrum in the United States. Consultations must be held with figures such as Ambassador Jeane J. Kirkpatrick and Congressman Jack Kemp and others to assure that this Committee will have the confidence of all U.S. supporters of Nicaraguan democracy.

The staff of the Center will include the Executive Director, a Research Associate, an Administrative Director and at least one receptionist/typist.

Its specific functions the Center will include:

1. Maintain a document center with current materials on the Nicaraguan democratic movement.
2. Assist leaders of the Nicaraguan democratic movement in their efforts to inform the public in the United States on their work. The Nicaraguan leader who expects to serve as principal liason in the United States is Arturo Cruz, but other leaders who will be assisted include Adolfo Calero, Alfonso Robelo, and, if they desire it, Miskito Leaders Brooklyn Rivera and Wycliffe Diego.
3. Provide information to the U.S. Congress and the Executive Branch which will assist in the reporting and evaluation process mandated by H.R. 1577, section 104. This reporting requirement links the flow of U.S. government funds to the Nicaraguan resistance to a demonstrated commitment by the President of the United States and the Nicaraguan resistance to seek direct dialogue with the Nicaraguan government, to pursue a settlement of the conflict based upon the Contadora Objectives, and to provide assurances that possible human rights violations in Nicaragua will be closely monitored and firmly opposed.
4. Provide a vigorous flow of sound information to the U.S. media on the efforts of the Nicaraguan democrats and the conduct of the Nicaraguan government.
5. Assure that these public education efforts reach audiences outside the Washington/New York region. Special emphasis will be given to the religious, labor, academic and Hispanic communities.

GOVERNANCE

Although the day-to-day operations of the Center will be managed by its Coordinating Committee, ultimate legal and fiscal responsibility for the

Center will rest with the Foundation for Democratic Education, a tax-exempt educational organization which has been recognized under section 501(c)(3) of the IRS code, and is incorporated in the District of Columbia. (See attachment B). The Board of Directors of the Foundation for Democratic Education are: Penn Kemble, S. Harrison Dogole, Robert Goldwin, David Jessup, Thomas Kahn, Stephen Mann, Michael Novak and Bernard Rapoport. (See Attachment C.)

BUDGET
September 1985 to September 1986

Staff

Executive Director	\$40,000
Research Associate	\$30,000
Administrative Director	\$25,000
Receptionist, typist	<u>\$18,000</u>
Subtotal	\$113,000
Employee Benefits @ 17%	<u>\$ 19,210</u>

TOTAL STAFF COSTS \$132,210.00

Office

Rent (2,000 sq. ft. @ \$20/sqft)	\$40,000
Telephone (@ \$1,000/mo)	\$12,000
Printing & Postage (@ \$1,500 mo)	\$18,000
Copying (1 Sharp @ \$4,000 & service contract @ \$200 mo. & paper)	\$ 7,500
Messenger Service	\$ 2,000
Misc. Furniture & Supplies	<u>\$10,000</u>

TOTAL OFFICE COSTS \$89,500

Travel

Domestic	\$ 5,000
Overseas	<u>\$ 7,000</u>

TOTAL TRAVEL COSTS \$12,000

Miscellaneous & Contingency \$20,000

(Includes legal fees and accounting fees)

GRAND TOTAL \$253,710